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Washington - Congressmen Mike Doyle (D-Pa.) and Lee Terry (R-Neb.) today introduced bipartisan legislation that is needed for more community radio stations across the country to begin broadcasting.

"Low-power FM has the potential of making our communities stronger," Terry said. "Low-power FM radio offers the opportunity to broadcast when some might not otherwise be able to afford to do so. This is extremely important for noncommercial groups like schools, churches and neighborhoods."

Wes Hall, radio personality, author, community activist, and founder of Suntaman Communication - an advocate for low-power FM radio in Omaha - praised the bill: **"You'll find a tremendous groundswell of support for this effort."**

Suntaman, a nonprofit organization, is working to promote greater minority ownership of radio stations. Hall said low-power FM has the ability to help community members address the concerns of Omaha residents "across the board - economics, education, youth and religion."

Former Omaha Mayor Hal Daub agreed and said, "Omaha would benefit from this effort, which could help citizens invigorate redevelopment of businesses and neighborhoods."

In 2000, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued rules that would have allowed the establishment of thousands of low-power FM (LPFM) radio stations across the country. The

FCC's effort to promote diverse local voices on the radio dial was short-circuited when Congress enacted "the Radio Broadcast Preservation Act." This legislation compelled the FCC to issue LPFM licenses only to low-power radio stations that were at least four intervals on the radio dial away from existing full-power stations, out of concern that the new stations would cause interference with the existing stations' signals, but effectively preventing many low-power FM stations from broadcasting.

The "Radio Broadcast Preservation Act" law also required an independent study of how much separation was required to ensure that existing full-power signals were not compromised. The study required by the "Radio Broadcast Preservation Act," which was completed in 2003, concluded that reducing the separation between radio transmission frequencies to three spaces on the radio dial would not cause interference with existing broadcast signals.

"Diverse, informative, thought-provoking, locally-oriented programming has been dramatically restricted across the country by the current federal laws governing the separation between broadcast frequencies," Congressman Doyle said. "Enactment of this legislation would improve the quality of life in communities across the country by providing new and different programming - and especially programming addressing local interests and events - to these communities. In addition, the establishment of hundreds of low-power radio stations across the country would also help keep residents better informed during natural disasters and other local emergencies."

Congressmen Doyle and Terry today introduced legislation that would repeal the Radio Broadcast Preservation Act's requirement that radio stations in a given market be four intervals apart. They believe that reducing the required space between radio stations will allow thousands of new community-based LPFM stations across the country to begin broadcasting, dramatically increasing the diversity and community-orientation of radio programming across the country - and exponentially increasing the ability of local governments to communicate important safety information to their communities in the event of terrorist attacks or natural disasters. Identical legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Maria Cantwell (D-WA).

FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein praised the bill: "Localism and diversity have always been at the heart of radio. Many low-power FM stations across America reflect the best of these traditions and have flourished despite existing interference standards. As I've traveled throughout this country, I've seen local churches, schools and other community-based organizations use low-power stations to broadcast locally relevant news, information and music. That's the essence of radio, and we should do all we can

to promote it."

Congressmen Doyle and Terry both serve on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction over federal telecommunications policy.

